



STRANGE
SUSPENSE STORIES

No 32



10¢

STRANGE SUSPENSE STORIES

A CHARLTON PUBLICATION



S. DITKO

THROUGH THE
PAINTING INTO
"A WORLD OF HIS
OWN"



WEB COMIC
UNIVERSE.COM

Boys! Girls! Men! Women!

Do You Want **\$50⁰⁰** or **\$100⁰⁰** Extra Money?

\$ HERE'S QUICK \$



EASY WAY TO EARN IT!

Send No Money—Merely Mail Coupon

We Ship You 24 Beautiful Super Size Religious Wall Mottoes

\$ ON CREDIT! Friends, Neighbors and Others Buy on Sight!

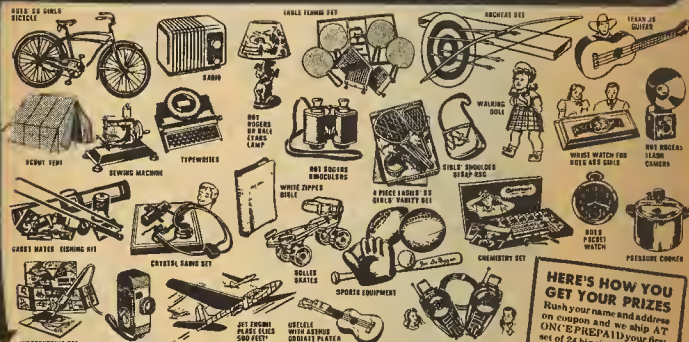
Serve the Lord while you earn extra cash...up to \$50 to \$100! Just mail the coupon below with your name and address—SEND NO MONEY—and the FUNman will ship to you POSTPAID and ON CREDIT 24 extra large richly decorated Religious Wall Mottoes. These gorgeous, inspiring mottoes sell amazingly fast at just 35c each. Your friends, neighbors and other folks buy on sight; many take six or more for every room in the house. Many boys and girls, men and women sell out all 24 mottoes in a few hours and make \$2.40 for themselves in a hurry.

HERE'S HOW YOU EARN MONEY FAST

When you have sold all 24 mottoes, you will have collected \$8.40 altogether. Merely send \$6.00 to the FUNman in payment for the mottoes and keep all the rest of the \$2.40 for yourself. You can probably sell out in a single afternoon...and that means you can make the full \$2.40 profit after school or on a Saturday. If you prefer you can earn exciting prizes like those shown below. Help our Lord crush graft, sin, greed and evil thinking...and earn welcome extra cash or prizes. Rush Coupon TODAY!

OR YOUR
CHOICE OF

PRIZES GIVEN



HERE'S HOW YOU GET YOUR PRIZES

Rush your name and address on coupon and we ship AT ONCE PREPAID your first set of 24 big size richly decorated Mottoes ON 15 Days TRUST. When you have sold the 24 Mottoes, send the \$8.40 you have collected and you can secure your choice of many wonderful prizes. Hurry, send TODAY for 24 Mottoes ON TRUST and big PRIZE CATALOG FREE!

The FUNman, Dept. X-109, 5726 N. Broadway, Chicago 40, Ill. **FREE BIG PRIZE CATALOG**

Please rush to me on 15 days credit 24 Religious Wall Mottoes to sell at 35c each. Also include big Prize Catalog FREE. I will remit amount required as explained under description of prize in BIG PRIZE CATALOG within 15 days and select the prize I want or keep a cash commission as explained

NAME..... AGE.....

STREET or RFD.....

TOWN..... Zone..... STATE.....

FREE Membership in FUNman's Fun Club

EXTRA! Sell mottoes and send payment within 15 days, and we'll give you FREE a year's Membership in the FUNman's Fun Club. Membership card, certificate, secret code, giant packet of fun materials all yours—PLUS many extra surprises!

SEND NO MONEY!... We Trust You!

The FUNman, Dept. X-109, 5726 N. Broadway, Chicago 40, Illinois

STRANGE SUSPENSE STORIES

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STRANGE SUSPENSE STORIES

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BY THE
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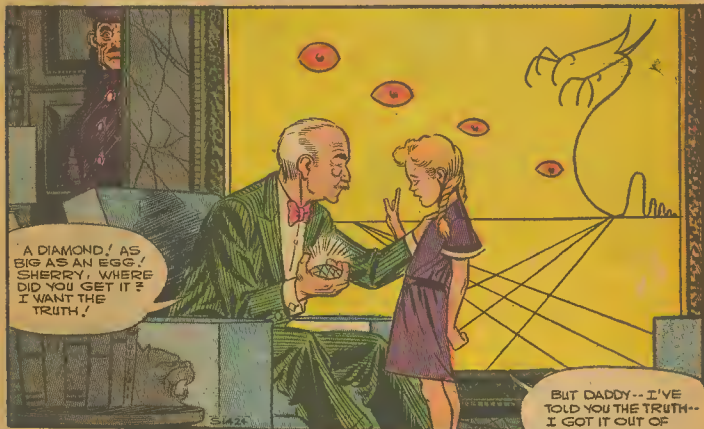


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Alfred P. Lopez Executive Editor

HENDRIX HAD STUMBLED ONTO SOMETHING WHICH COULD MAKE HIM THE RICHEST MAN ON EARTH! BUT HE NEVER EXPECTED TO BE SO RICH THAT HE WOULD HAVE

A WORLD OF HIS OWN



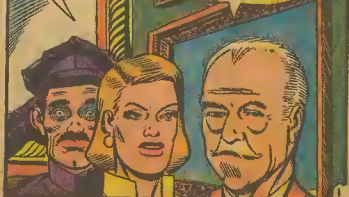
IN A WAY, MARTHA HARRIS WAS RESPONSIBLE! IT WAS SHE WHO FOUND THE PAINTING, AND RIGHT FROM THE FIRST, SHE WAS SORRY...

MARTHA--IT'S BEAUTIFUL! HOW EVER DID YOU FIND IT?

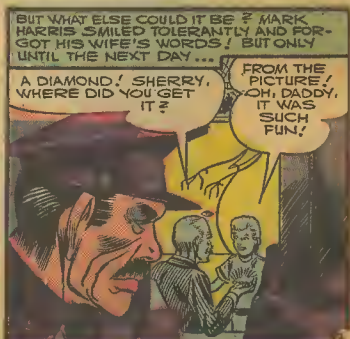
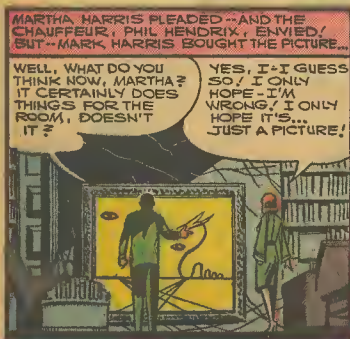
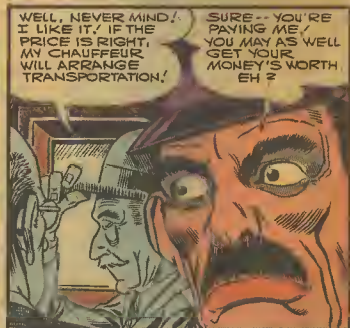
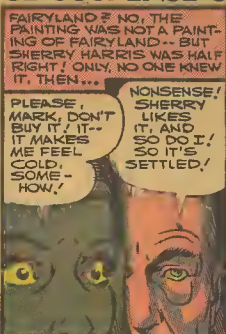
I-- I JUST HAD HENDRIX MOVE THESE OTHER PAINTINGS ASIDE AND... THERE IT WAS! BUT I WISH-- I HADN'T!

MARK, I-- I DON'T LIKE IT! I DON'T KNOW WHY BUT I JUST DON'T! YOU AREN'T THINKING OF BUYING IT?

I CERTAINLY AM! WE CAME TO THIS GALLERY LOOKING FOR PAINTINGS TO ADD TO MY COLLECTION, DIDN'T WE? I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE IT!



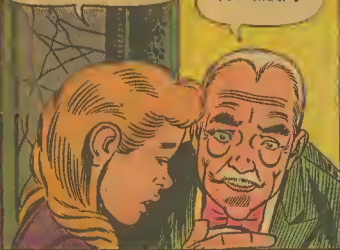
STRANGE SUSPENSE STORIES



STRANGE SUSPENSE STORIES

LAST NIGHT, WHILE YOU WERE UPSTAIRS, I WAS LOOKING AT THE PICTURE AND ALL OF A SUDDEN IT...IT WAS LIKE A DOORWAY! I JUST STEPPED IN!

YOU WHAT?



SHERRY--TRY TO UNDERSTAND, THIS DIAMOND IS VERY VALUABLE! SO THIS IS NO TIME FOR MAKE-BELIEVE! WHERE DID YOU REALLY GET IT?

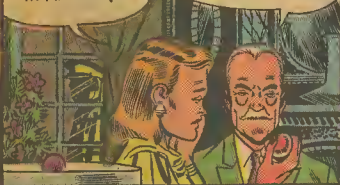
BUT I'VE TOLD YOU! FROM THE PICTURE! DADDY, IT'S THE TRUTH! THERE ARE LOTS OF PRETTY RED STONES LIKE THAT ONE, ALL COLORS!



A CHILD, AND A FAIRY TALE! AT FIRST, MARK HARRIS DID NOT BELIEVE... BUT THERE WERE TO BE OTHER NIGHTS...

ANOTHER ONE! A RUBY, THIS TIME! AND SHE KEEPS TELLING THE SAME STORY! MARK, I'M AFRAID!

AND SO AM I! IT CAN'T BE TRUE! BUT IF IT ISN'T, WHERE IS SHE GETTING THE STONES?



IT'S GOT TO BE JUST A STORY! IT'S GOT TO BE!

WHY DOES IT HAVE TO BE A STORY, MARK? THE STONES ARE REAL! WHAT IF THERE IS... ANOTHER WORLD BEYOND THAT PAINTING?



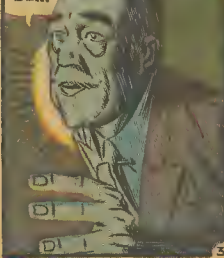
THERE CAN'T BE! GO TO BED! I-I'VE GOT TO THINK! HYSTERIC WON'T GET US ANYWHERE! I'LL WORK THIS OUT...SOMEHOW!



SOMEHOW? BUT HOW? HOW DOES A MAN THINK CLEARLY--WHEN IN HIS HEART HE IS TERRIFIED?



A DOORWAY--TO ANOTHER WORLD! IT CAN'T BE! IT JUST CAN'T BE...



Boys! Girls! Men! Women!

We'll Send You These 2 Boxes of Sensational New First-Time Ideas in **GREETING CARDS**

and Show You How
to Make

\$75 to \$500⁰⁰ AND EVEN MORE

Easily and Quickly
in Your Spare Time

Send No Money—Mail Coupon Below!

If you can see extra cash, here's the easiest, pleasantest way to make it. The exquisite Greeting Cards in the Royal Deluxe 3-in-1 All-Occasion Assortment win friends by the score. An exciting new idea... 3 different popular shapes all in one Assortment! And the HI-LITES Humorous Assortment is simply irresistible. The moment friends and neighbors see these two spectacular, new-idea assortments, they want them. Each Assortment sells for such a low price, you'll take orders right and left, keep up to 50¢ of every \$1.00 you take in.

Making Money is Easy—Fast—Fun!

Everyone falls in love with these new greeting cards instantly. Let our new-idea Assortments make more money FOR YOU than ever before in spare time. See how wonderfully easy it is to sell greeting cards which say in the modern manner what's in the sender's heart for Birthdays, Anniversaries, Get Well, Baby-Births, and many other occasions.

ORGANIZATIONS: Churches, clubs, Veterans' auxiliaries, etc. can add hundreds of dollars to your treasury funds so easily with these fast selling assortments.

40 More Popular Money-Makers

These thrilling new All-Occasion Assortments shown are only 2 of dozens of fast sellers. We'll send details of charming Mandarin Parchment Assortment, lovely new Golden Photochrome Assortment, gorgeous Gift Wrappings, a variety of beautiful Stationery and Personal Notes, Imported Napkins, Children's Books, a host of Novelty Gift Items—and an exquisite new assortment of Easter Greeting Cards.

Be First! Mail Coupon Today!

See for yourself! Don't send a penny. Mail coupon for the 2 assortments shown here, sent you an approval, all postage paid. We'll include FREE Illustrated Catalog and details of our amazingly simple Money-Making Plan. Mail the coupon TODAY!

11 East 26th St., Dept. A-123
New York 10, N.Y.



HI-LITES
HUMOROUS ASSORTMENT
Birthdays, Anniversaries,
Get Well, Baby-Births, Etc.
Terrific designs that tickle
the funny bone, in new
short TALL shape, delight-
fully decorated with
sequins, glitter, flaking.
The gayest and cleverest
cards ever created.



ROYAL DELUXE
ALL-OCCASION ASSORTMENT
Birthdays, Get Well, Baby-
Birth, Anniversaries, Etc.
The modern way to buy
Greeting Cards—18 exqui-
site designs in 3 most popu-
lar shapes—all 3 shapes in
one assortment—all embel-
lished with "jewels", rock-
ing, bronzing, embossing.



SEND NO MONEY

Paste Coupon on postcard
or mail in envelope

Wallace Brown, Inc., Dept. A-123,
11 East 26th St., New York 10, N.Y.

I want to make extra money. Please send me an ap-
proval of the 2 Greeting Card Assortments shown above,
plus FREE Illustrated Catalog and Money-Making Plan.

Name _____

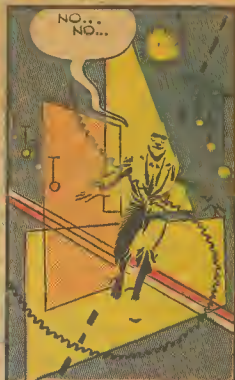
Address _____

City _____

State _____

If writing for an organiza-
tion, give its name _____

STRANGE SUSPENSE STORIES



STRANGE SUSPENSE STORIES



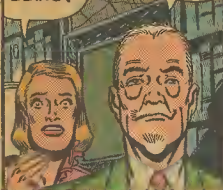
STRANGE SUSPENSE STORIES



HENDRIX SCREAMED, BUT THERE WAS NO ONE TO HEAR. THE DOORWAY WAS GONE, AND HE HAD NO WAY OF KNOWING WHY...

MARK, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

IT'S ALREADY DONE, MARTHA!



SHERRY WASN'T MAKING UP STORIES, MARTHA! I KNOW THAT NOW! SO I'VE MADE SURE THAT SHE'LL NEVER GO INTO THAT OTHER WORLD AGAIN!

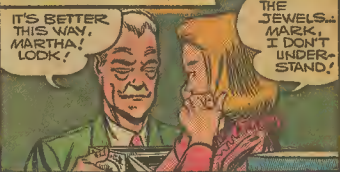


I'VE BLOTTED IT OUT, FOR EVER!

SOMEDAY, PERHAPS, HENDRIX MIGHT FIND A WAY BACK! BUT FOR NOW, HENDRIX DID NOT EVEN HEAR THE MOST IRDNIC THING OF ALL...

IT'S BETTER THIS WAY, MARTHA! LOOK!

THE JEWELS... MARK, I DON'T UNDERSTAND!



NOR DO I! I ONLY KNOW THAT I FOUND THEM LIKE THIS! I GUESS SOMETHING JUST HAPPENS TO THEM WHEN THEY'RE TAKEN FROM THEIR OWN WORLD!



NO, HENDRIX DID NOT HEAR--AT LEAST HE WAS SPARED THAT...

I DON'T UNDERSTAND--ANY OF IT, MARTHA! BUT AT LEAST NOW NO ONE WILL EVER ENTER THAT OTHER WORLD AGAIN JUST TO GATHER UP JEWELS THAT GLITTER FOR A FEW DAYS AND THEN TURN--TO DUST!

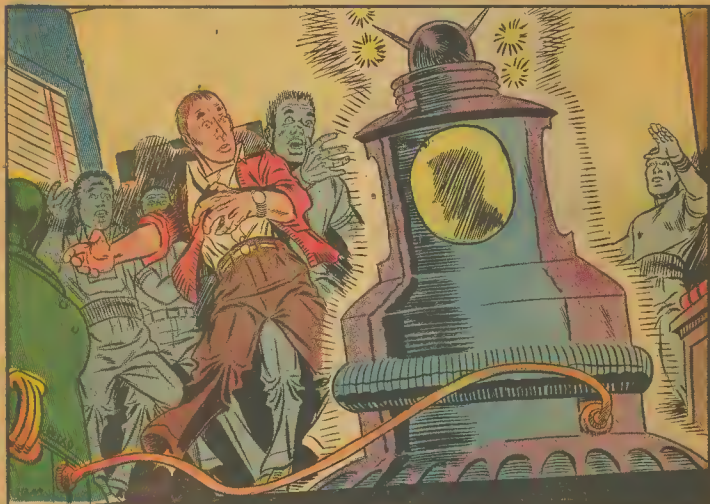


END

STRANGE SUSPENSE STORIES

JOE SAWYER LOVED A PRACTICAL JOKE -- AND THIS ONE WAS A MASTERPIECE! BUT HE SHOULD HAVE MADE CERTAIN THAT HE WOULD HAVE....

The LAST LAUGH



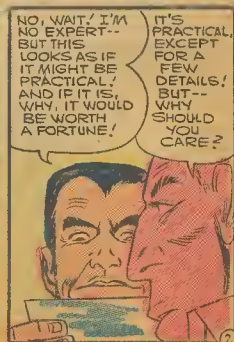
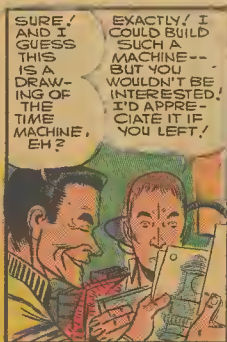
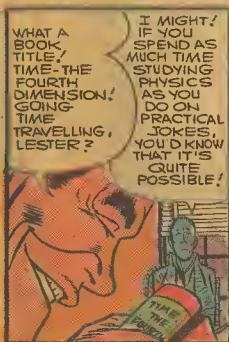
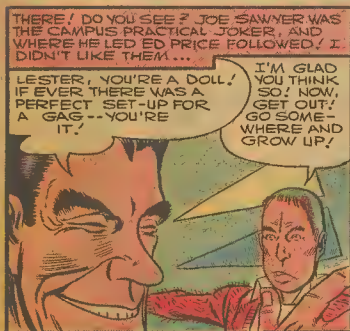
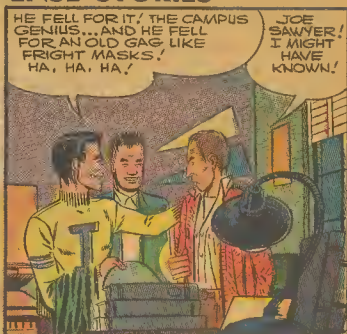
ALL I CAN SAY IS -- I WASN'T TO BLAME! IT WAS ALL JOE SAWYER'S DOING! HE WAS THE ONE WHO STARTED IT ALL...



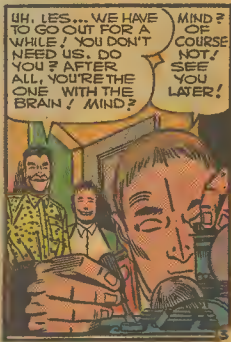
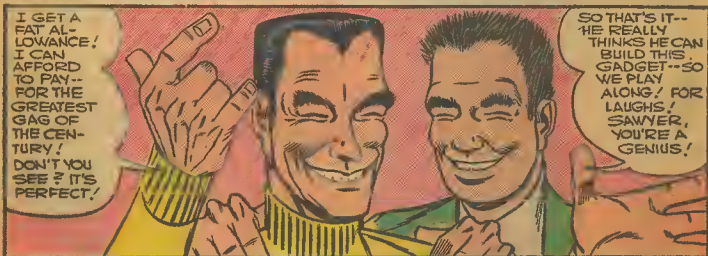
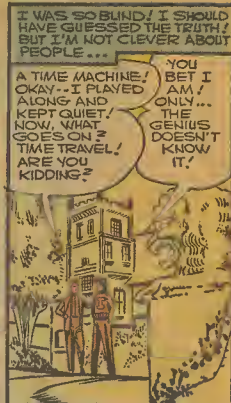
OH, NO! GET AWAY...



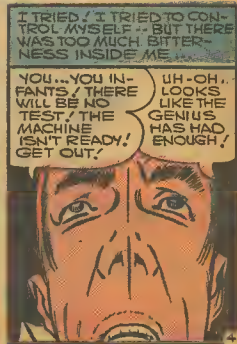
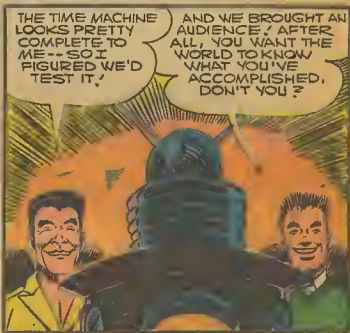
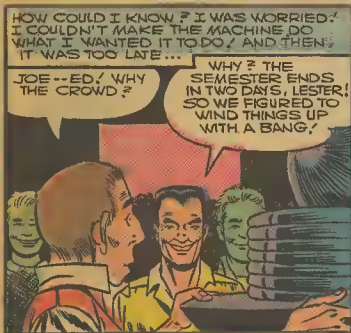
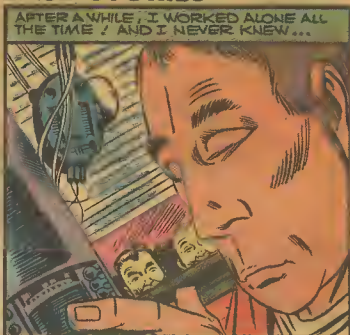
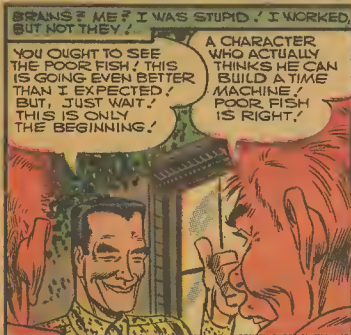
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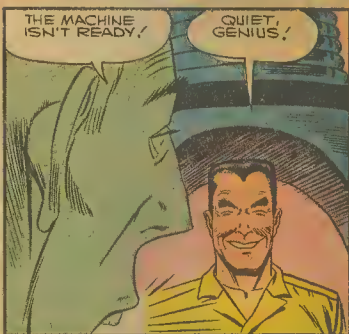
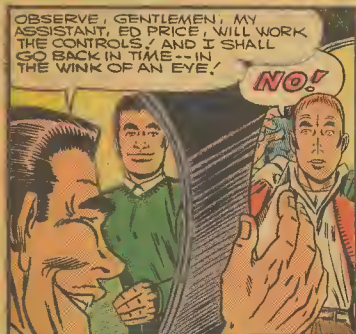
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STRANGE SUSPENSE STORIES





100 Toy Soldiers \$1.25

**100 TOY SOLDIERS, MADE OF DURABLE PLASTIC,
EACH ON ITS OWN BASE, MEASURING UP TO 4 1/2"!**

- ★ FUN TO SHOW
- ★ FUN TO TRADE
- ★ FUN TO COLLECT

PACKED in this FOOTLOCKER
TOY STORAGE BOX



EACH FOOTLOCKER CONTAINS:

- | | |
|------------------|--------------|
| 4 Tanks | 8 Officers |
| 4 Jeeps | 8 Waves |
| 4 Battleships | 8 Wacs |
| 4 Cruisers | 4 Bombers |
| 4 Sailors | 4 Trucks |
| 4 Riflemen | 8 Jet Planes |
| 8 Machinegunners | 8 Cannon |
| 8 Sharpshooters | 4 Bazookamen |
| 4 Infantrymen | 4 Marksmen |

JOSELY CO., DEPT TCH-7
1472 Broadway
New York 36, N.Y. NO
HERE'S MY \$1.25 ! C.O.D.'s
Rush the TOY SOLDIERS TO ME!

Name

Address

City State

Canada and foreign orders send \$1.50 postal money order.

STRANGE SUSPENSE STORIES

IT WAS ALL OVER IN SECONDS! I GOT TO THE CONTROLS THEN-- BUT IT WAS USELESS...



BACK IN... YOU IDIOT! YOU DIDN'T TELL US THE MACHINE WORKED!

YOU DIDN'T LET ME! IT WAS YOUR DOING!



THEY WEREN'T LAUGHING THEN! NONE OF THEM! THEY WERE GRIM! BUT THERE WAS NOTHING TO BE DONE...

YOU CAN'T? YOU MUST! YOU CAN'T JUST LEAVE SAWYER-- SOMEWHERE IN THE PAST!

I HAVE NO CHOICE! I TOLD YOU-- THE MACHINE WASN'T READY! I STILL HAD THINGS TO WORK OUT!



I TRIED-- BUT I COULDN'T STOP IT IN TIME...

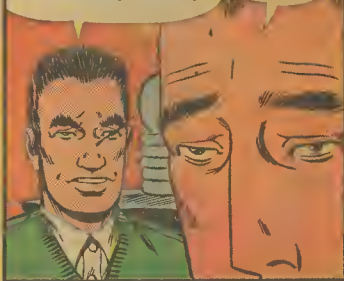
HE'S GONE! JUST... LIKE THAT!

HE'S GONE TWO HUNDRED YEARS BACK IN TIME! THAT'S WHAT THE CONTROLS WERE SET FOR!



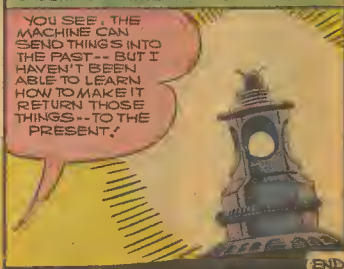
ALL RIGHT! MAYBE IT WAS! BUT NOW BRING HIM BACK! HURRY!

I CAN'T!



THERE WAS NOTHING AT ALL TO BE DONE! NOT THEN! MAYBE, IN TIME, I'LL BE ABLE TO BRING SAWYER BACK! BUT MEANWHILE, I WONDER IF HE'S STILL LAUGHING-- WHEREVER HE IS?

YOU SEE, THE MACHINE CAN SEND THINGS INTO THE PAST-- BUT I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO LEARN HOW TO MAKE IT RETURN THOSE THINGS-- TO THE PRESENT!



END

TRACK THAT TRAIN

On that Thursday afternoon, the Skyrocket Express Freight train passed the station at Doversville. Station Agent Bill Winkers was on the platform. Next to him was a local farmer, Henry Kass. The sun hit the silvery Diesel Locomotive pulling a long line of freight cars. The engineer, Paul Bryne, waved a hand at the station agent.

"Now there's a man for you," remarked Bill Winkers. "Been at the throttle for almost thirty-five years. We were at a party together last week. Raising funds for a swimming pool for the kids. I asked Paul if he missed the old steam locomotives. He laughed and said this was progress. Bigger and better things and more to come. Seems he heard about the automatic engine they have been trying at the Freight Center. Starts, goes ahead, and stops all by itself."

The words were falling on deaf ears. Farmer Henry Kass was doing something he did when he was a kid. Counting the freight cars.

"Thirty-eight, thirty-nine, forty, and the caboose. Must be a fortune in all those cars," he half-remarked to himself. "Which reminds me. I have to buy a set of electric trains for my nephew. His birthday is next week."

The next station after Doversville was Parker's Point, a distance of one hundred and ten miles. The S. K. & W. R. R. had only one track between these two points which was used mainly for freight as passenger traffic went on the main line. That one hundred and ten miles covered desert land, forest, and mountains. There were three rivers that were bridged.

At eight-thirty that night the freight train hadn't reached Parker's Point. Allen Marks was station agent and he was worried. For that delay meant only two things. Either a wreck on the line or perhaps an obstacle on the track that had halted the train. He followed procedures and started to call up headquarters when he suddenly remembered something. Why hadn't they cut into the telegraph line and sent him a message? That was the duty of James Hunt in the caboose. He sent his message and received his reply.

"Wrecking crew on its way. Go ahead to scene of probable accident on gas ear." The message was authorized by the Superintendent of the

S. K. & W. R. R. Allen Marks then reached for the phone and called up Dr. Peter Kane.

"Hello, Doc," he said. "This is Allen Marks. I think there has been a terrible accident along the line. The Skyrocket Express Freight train is long overdue. Jump into your car and come over. We'll use the gas car and see what happened."

Doctor Peter Kane was uncomfortable as he sat on the small chair on the gas car that comfortably seated only two people. The little flat car powered by a gas engine was making its top speed of forty miles an hour. Before he left, Allen Marks had sent a message to Doversville. The gas car pulled into the Doversville station with two perplexed agents facing each other.

"Where's the train?" demanded Allen Marks.

"Passed here at one ten this afternoon," replied Bill Winkers. "Look at my record sheet. Henry Kass was standing here as I waved to Paul Bryne. Now you ask me, where's the train? I saw it last."

At the end of the week, the S. K. & W. R. R. knew it had a first class impossible mystery on its hand. An entire loaded freight train had vanished. The president of the R. R. talked to the head of his railroad police force.

"You have called in the state and federal authorities. You have checked the rivers. Where's that freight train? It didn't vanish into thin air. Somebody stole it! But why and how? And where are the two men of the engine crew and the three men in the caboose? I have contacted Dr. Ernest Scanon. He and his staff specialize in solving impossible mysteries. He expects you tomorrow afternoon at three o'clock. We will spare no expense to find that missing train."

Dr. Ernest Scanon smiled as he extended his hand to John Kuhn, head of the railroad police force of the S. K. & W. R. R.

"We will start in two days. I need some special equipment which I am getting from the Railroad Research Bureau. It should help us to solve the mystery. You will accompany us so we can make a quick decision as to what course of action to take."

Two days later another Diesel Engine pulled out of the Doversville Station. It carried a long steel

STRANGE SUSPENSE STORIES

ROBERT HINES SOLD FARM MACHINERY, AND HE WAS SAVING TO GET MARRIED! JUST A TYPICAL, MODERATELY SUCCESSFUL YOUNG FELLOW TO ALL APPEARANCES! YET THERE WERE BULLETINS BEARING HIS PICTURE IN ALL LAW OFFICES AND AN INTENSE MANHUNT ON THAT ENDED IN A HAYFIELD WHERE A MAN KNOWN AS ROBERT HINES WENT DOWN UNDER A HAIL OF POLICE BULLETS! COULD THIS BE REAL -- OR WAS IT A ...

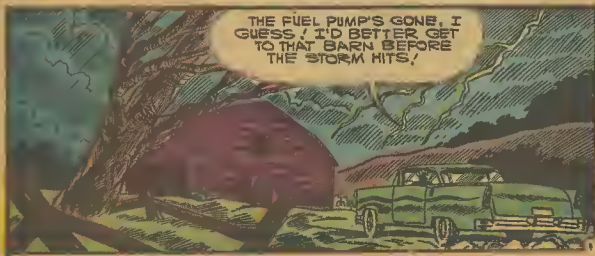
NIGHTMARE



NO! DON'T SHOOT! THEY THINK THAT'S ME THEY'RE SHOOTING AT!

WE GAVE HINES HIS CHANCE! GET HIM BEFORE HE GETS ONE OF US!

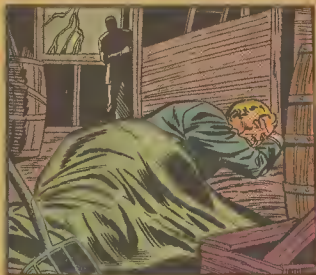
HINES BEGAN THIS PARTICULAR NIGHTMARE ON A FITTING EVENING! IT WAS DARK AND THUNDER WAS RUMBLING JUST AS HIS CAR SPUTTERED OUT...



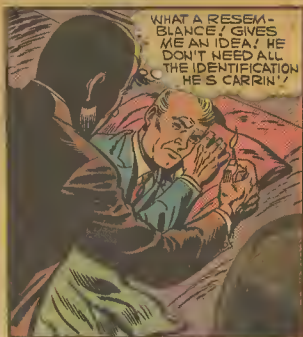
THE FUEL PUMP'S GONE, I GUESS! I'D BETTER GET TO THAT BARN BEFORE THE STORM HITS!

STRANGE SUSPENSE STORIES

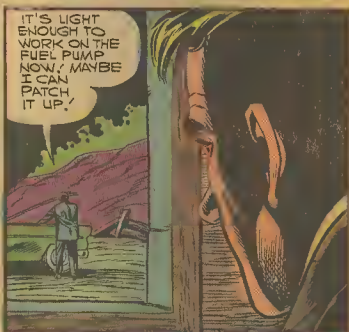
HINES FOUND A DRY SPOT AND PREPARED TO SPEND THE NIGHT. THE ONLY LIGHT CAME FROM THE WIERD FLASHES OF LIGHTNING...



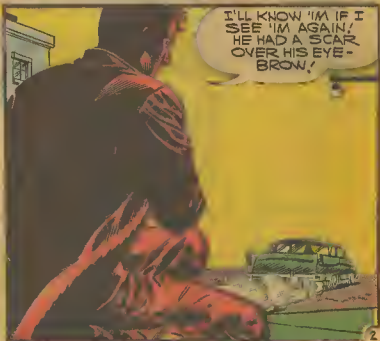
THE NIGHTMARE SEEMED TO BEGIN THEN. HINES TOSSED, DREAMING THAT THERE WAS SOMEONE NEARBY...



HINES WAS TIRED -- SO TIRED THAT IT TOOK A LONG TIME FOR THE NIGHTMARE TO AWAKEN HIM...



LATER, IN TOWN...



STRANGE SUSPENSE STORIES

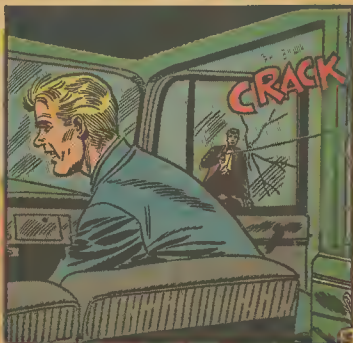
IN CITY AFTER CITY, WHILE HINES SOLD HIS FARM MACHINERY, A MAN IN A GREEN SEDAN WAS STAGING HOLD-UPS...



LATER...



HINES NEEDED THAT MONEY AND HE FOUGHT FOR IT! HIS LUNGE TOOK THE OTHER BY SURPRISE...



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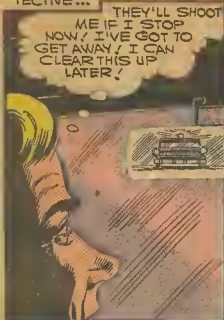
Name

Address

STRANGE SUSPENSE STORIES



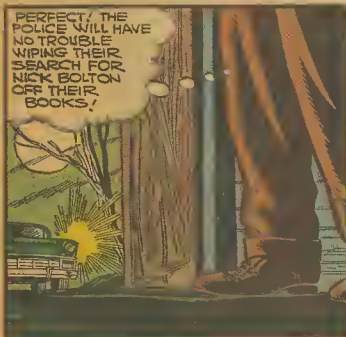
HINES THOUGHT IT WAS A HOLD-UP -- THEN HE SAW THE BLINKING RED LIGHT! HE'D FOUGHT WITH A DETECTIVE ...



DRIVING LIKE A MADMAN, HE TURNED ON THE RADIO, AND THEN HE KNEW HE WAS IN REAL TROUBLE!



I LOST THEM! I'VE GOT TO HOLE UP SOMEWHERE! I KNOW, THE BARN WHERE I HAD THAT DREAM! THEY WON'T FIND ME THERE!



HOLD IT, HINES! IF YOU GOT ANYTHING TO SAY BEFORE THE POLICE GET HERE, MAKE IT FAST! I HEARD 'EM TURNIN' OFF THE MAIN ROAD JUST NOW!

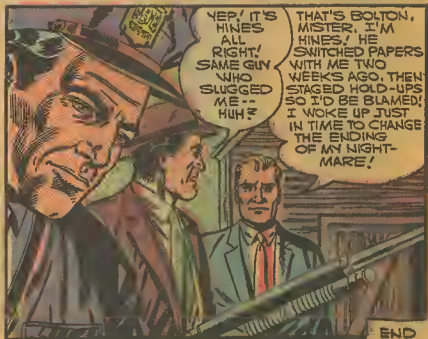
I WASN'T DREAMING THAT NIGHT I SLEPT HERE! IT WAS YOU GOING THROUGH MY POCKETS! YOU... YOU LOOK JUST LIKE ME!



STRANGE SUSPENSE STORIES



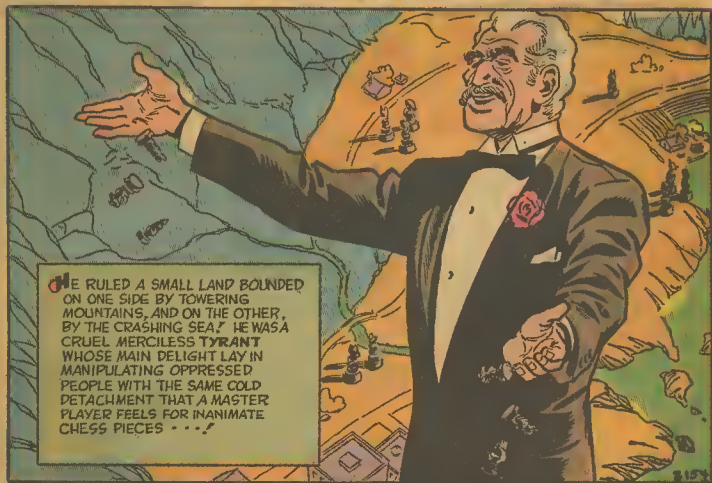
HINES SCRAMBLED AWAY INTO THE DARKNESS, AND BOLTON KNEW TIME WAS GROWING SHORT, HE RAN TO A SIDE DOOR AND STARTED ACROSS THE FIELD, IT WAS PITCH BLACK-- BUT SUDDENLY...



END

STRANGE SUSPENSE STORIES

CHECKMATE



HE RULED A SMALL LAND BOUNDED ON ONE SIDE BY TOWERING MOUNTAINS, AND ON THE OTHER, BY THE CRASHING SEA. HE WAS A CRUEL MERCILESS TYRANT WHOSE MAIN DELIGHT LAY IN MANIPULATING OPPRESSED PEOPLE WITH THE SAME COLD DETACHMENT THAT A MASTER PLAYER FEELS FOR INANIMATE CHESS PIECES . . .

BUT TYRANNY AND CRUELTY ALWAYS BEGET OPPOSITION! AND SO--

I BEG TO REPORT THAT A NEW LIBERATION COMMITTEE HAS BEEN FORMED, SIR!



BAH-- I HAVE KNOWN THAT FOR MONTHS! . . . THERE IS ONLY ONE THING I DO NOT KNOW-- AND THAT IS WHO THEIR LEADER IS! HE IS THE ONE MAN WHO KEEPS SLIPPING THROUGH MY FINGERS! . . . SO LET THE FOOLS KEEP CONSPIRING . . . SOONER OR LATER, THEY WILL LEAD ME TO HIM!



STRANGE SUSPENSE STORIES

THE TYRANT HAD A CRUEL SENSE OF HUMOR, AND HE HAD SET ASIDE THIS DAY AS A NATIONAL HOLIDAY IN HONOR OF HIMSELF--WHEN THE OPPRESSED PEOPLE WOULD BE FORCED TO ACCLAIM HIM FOR HAVING ENSLAVED THEM! AND NOW PREPARATIONS WERE BEING MADE FOR THE GRAND PARADE

NOT FAR FROM THE POINT WHERE THE PARADE WAS TO START, A MAN STOOD WAITING--A MAN WHO HAD BEEN GIVEN A VERY SPECIAL ASSIGNMENT BY THE MYSTERIOUS LEADER OF THE NEW LIBERATION COMMITTEE!

JUST ONE MORE HOUR--AND THE TYRANT WILL COME RIDING BY! JUST ONE MORE HOUR--AND OUR LAND WILL BE FREED!



MEANWHILE, AT THE PALACE --

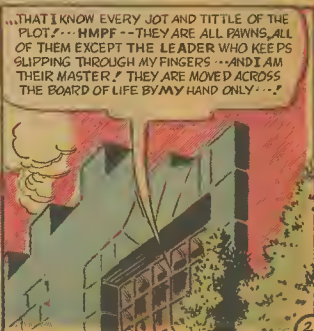
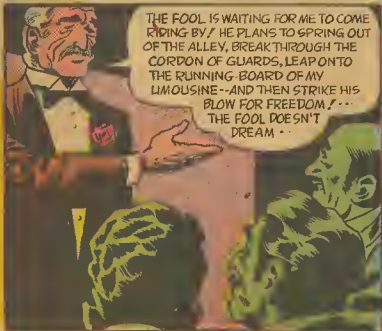
SIR, THE LIBERATION COMMITTEE'S ASSASSIN IS UNDER SURVEILLANCE BY OUR AGENTS!

EXCELLENT--!



THE FOOL IS WAITING FOR ME TO COME RIDING BY! HE PLANS TO SPRING OUT OF THE ALLEY, BREAK THROUGH THE CORDON OF GUARDS, LEAP ONTO THE RUNNING BOARD OF MY LIMOUSINE--AND THEN STRIKE HIS BLOW FOR FREEDOM!-- THE FOOL DOESN'T DREAM--

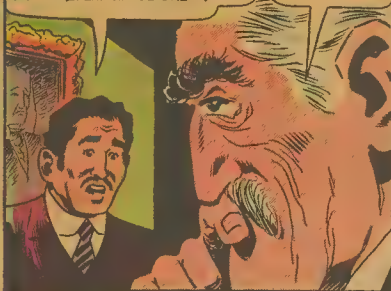
...THAT I KNOW EVERY JOT AND TITTLE OF THE PLOT!--HMPF--THEY ARE ALL PAWNS, ALL OF THEM EXCEPT THE LEADER WHO KEEPS SLIPPING THROUGH MY FINGERS--AND I AM THEIR MASTER! THEY ARE MOVED ACROSS THE BOARD OF LIFE BY MY HAND ONLY--!



STRANGE SUSPENSE STORIES

BUT, SIR--THE MAN OUT THERE IS AN ACCOMPLISHED ASSASSIN! SHOULD'NT WE APPREHEND HIM BEFORE--?

SHHHH-- I AM THINKING--

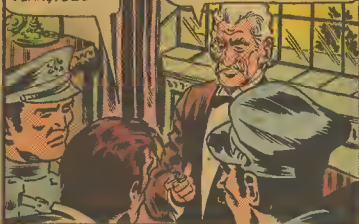


...IN THE DUNGEON BELOW THE CASTLE, LIES THE INFORMER WHO REVEALED TO ME EVERY DETAIL BUT ONE OF THE PLOT! AND THAT SINGLE DETAIL IS THE IDENTITY OF THE COMMITTEE'S LEADER WHO PERSONALLY GAVE THE ASSASSIN HIS ASSIGNMENT!-- I WANT THE INFORMER BROUGHT UP HERE AT ONCE!

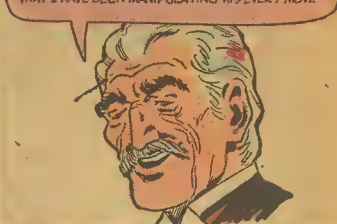


WHY WAS I THROWN INTO THE DUNGEON? WH-WHAT DO YOU WANT OF ME? Y-YOU PROMISED IF I REVEALED THE PLAN, YOU'D--

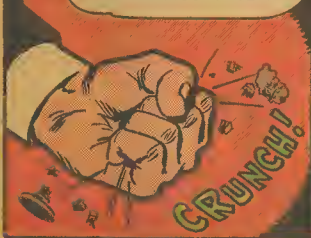
HMMMM-- YES-- JUST AS I THOUGHT. HE IS AS TALL AS I AM-- HE HAS THE SAME BUILD TOO! NOW IF WE COULD ONLY MAKE HIS FACE APPEAR EXACTLY LIKE MINE--



WE COULD LET HIM LEAD THE PARADE IN MY PLACE! HE WOULD BE THE ONE ELIMINATED BY THE ASSASSIN! ... AHHH, I CAN SEE IT ALL NOW-- THE ASSASSIN MAD WITH JOY, CERTAIN THAT HE HAS STRUCK THE FINAL BLOW FOR FREEDOM! AND WHEN HE LEARNS WITH BRUTAL SUDDENNESS THAT I AM STILL ALIVE-- THAT I HAVE BEEN MANIPULATING HIS EVERY MOVE--



HIS SPIRIT WILL BE CRUSHED!-- AND THEN IT WILL BE A SIMPLE MATTER TO GET FROM HIM THE IDENTITY OF THE MAN WHO HAS ELUDED ME SO LONG-- THE LIBERATION COMMITTEE'S MYSTERIOUS LEADER!



B-BUT YOU PROMISED--!



HAVE A SEDATIVE ADMINISTERED TO THE WRETCH, HIS WHIMPERING OFFENDS ME.

STRANGE SUSPENSE STORIES

... A BRILLIANT PLAN SIR--BUT HIS FACE...HOW WILL YOU CHANGE HIS FACE TO APPEAR EXACTLY LIKE YOURS ?!

HMMM--LET ME GIVE IT JUST ONE MOMENT'S THOUGHT...



I HAVE IT!--PEREZ--THE MAKE-UP ARTIST OF THE NATIONAL OPERA!-- HAVE PEREZ BROUGHT HERE! HE WILL BE MY FINAL PAWN! USING HIM, I SHALL CHECKMATE THE LEADER AT LAST--!



LATER...

WELL, PEREZ--CAN IT BE DONE? THERE ISN'T MUCH TIME, MAN--YOU'LL HAVE TO TELL ME FAST!



FOR FIVE SLOW-DRAWING MINUTES, THE MAKE-UP ARTIST SCRUTINIZED THE FACES OF THE INFORMER AND THE CRUEL TYRANT--AND DURING ALL THAT TIME HE SAID NOTHING. THEN --

IT CAN BE DONE! BUT IT WILL REQUIRE THE UTMOST OF CONCENTRATION! I MUST BE ALONE WITH THE TWO SUBJECTS AS I WORK!



ONE CURT COMMAND BY THE TYRANT...AND THE THREE MEN WERE ALONE!

ARE YOU READY TO START, PEREZ?

YES... I AM READY TO START.



AT THAT MOMENT --

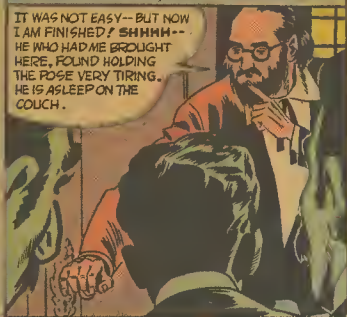
JUST A HALF-HOUR MORE---AND THE TYRANT WILL COME RIDING BY!



STRANGE SUSPENSE STORIES

NOT LONG AFTERWARD, BACK AT THE PALACE ---

IT WAS NOT EASY-- BUT NOW I AM FINISHED! SHHHH-- HE WHO HAD ME BROUGHT HERE, FOUND HOLDING THE ROSE VERY TIRING. HE IS ASLEEP ON THE COUCH.



PROP THE INFORMER UP IN THE CAR! PLACE SUNGLASSES OVER HIS EYES ---SO NO ONE WILL KNOW THEY ARE CLOSED!

OUR RULER IS A BRILLIANT MAN!-- ONLY HE COULD HAVE DEVISED SO BRILLIANT A PLAN!



NOW, WITH BLARING TRUMPETS AND EAR-SPLITTING DRUMS, THE PARADE STARTED!



AND AS THE PARADE PASSED THE SPOT WHERE THE ASSASSIN STOOD WAITING --

KRAKK!



SIR, WAKE UP! THE REPORT JUST CAME IN! YOUR PLAN-- OH (GROAN) NO!!



SOFT WAX ON HIS FACE ... ALL MELTED! H-HE'S THE INFORMER! TH-THAT MEANS THE MAN IN THE CAR W-WAS ...



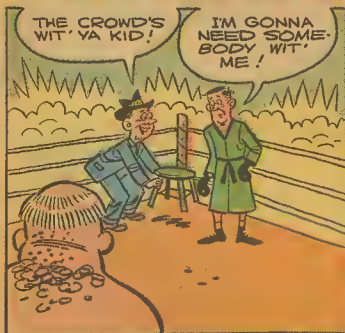
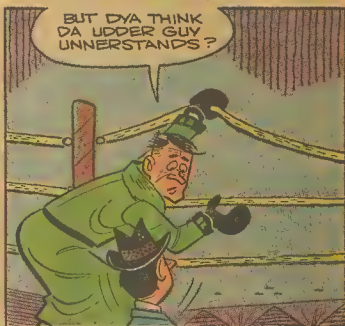
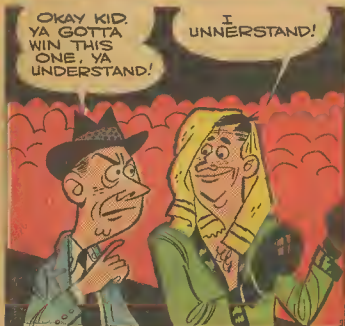
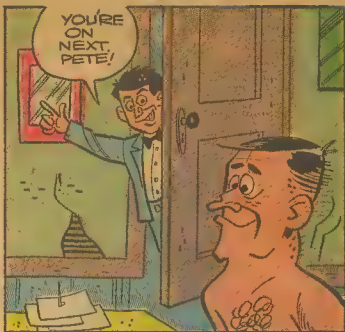
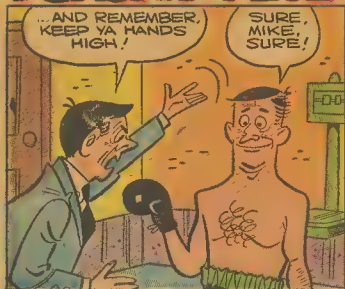
AND SO THE SMALL LAND BOUNDED ON ONE SIDE BY TOWERING MOUNTAINS, AND ON THE OTHER BY THE CRASHING SEA, WAS FREE AT LAST! FOR PEREZ HIMSELF HAD BEEN THE MYSTERIOUS LEADER, AND PEREZ, USING HIS ART IN THE CAUSE OF FREEDOM, HAD CHECKMATED THE TYRANT!!



THE END.

STRANGE SUSPENSE STORIES

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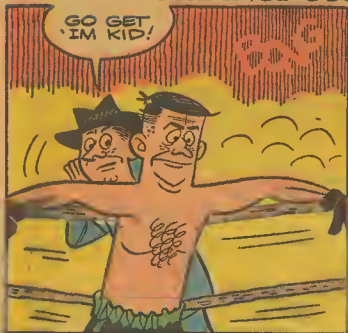
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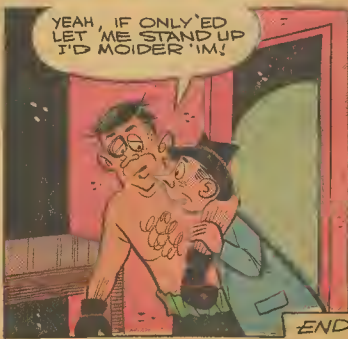
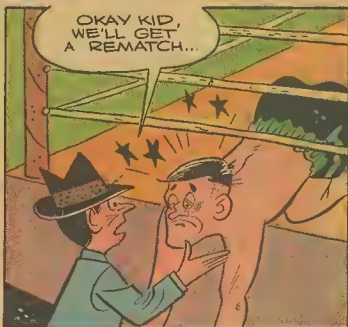
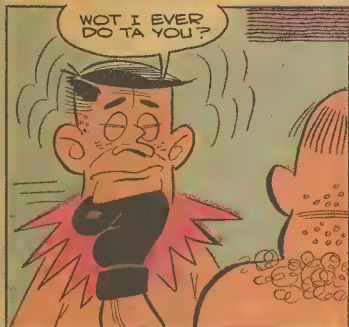
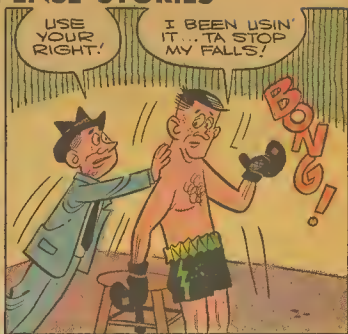
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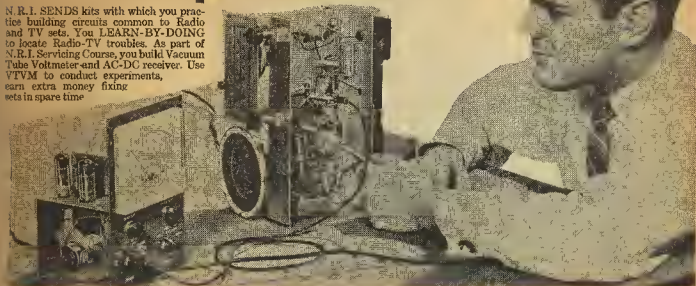
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